



Human
Dignity
Curriculum

HUMAN DIGNITY CURRICULUM

GRADE 6



World **Youth** Alliance

The **Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC)** is a project of the World Youth Alliance.

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To prepare for the Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC), the following three things should be done:

1. The teacher should call for a letter from parents, guardians, family members or friends for each student; this *Dear You* letter should explain to the student the reasons why the parent, guardian, family member, etc., loves the student and finds him special. The alternative here would be for the teacher or teachers to write the letters.

Sample Request Letter:

Dear Parents,

For our Human Dignity Curriculum project in Grade 6, we are asking that all families provide us with a letter written to your child. You can email this letter to me [email], or mail it to me [address], or send it with your child in a sealed envelope.

Your letter should answer the following questions: Why do you love this student? Why is he valuable to you? How is he special?

This letter will help start our project! The deadline for providing this letter is [date]. Please take the time to provide a letter, and let me know of any questions.

[teacher]

The purpose of this activity is to help reveal to students the dignity they possess and the ways in which it has already been revealed to them.

2. Students should bring in a photo or a drawing of themselves. The photo/drawing will be used for a later class activity.
3. Students should prepare an HDC binder or folder. Ideally, students will be able to collect their worksheets and notes into this binder or folder over the duration of the HDC. A solid archive should be kept to help students contribute to the final HDC project.

The teacher should take note of this suggested final HDC project: a class newspaper that can be shared with families and/or the grade/school, drawing on students' different homework as- assignments and activities, that paints a portrait of lessons learned about human dignity.

PURPOSE

To introduce human dignity as the unique value of human persons

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Explain that they are persons with human dignity.
2. Personally recognize their own dignity.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Dear You* letters (see Materials [for Preparatory Work])
- lined paper for letter-writing
- Supplementary materials:
 - *Life without limb-its*, **Daily Mail** article
(<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1196755/The-astonishing-story-man-born-arms- legs--world-famous-swimmer-surfer-footballer.html>)
 - *Motivational speaker Nick Vujicic on the power of staying positive*, **Channel NewsAsia** video
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=707VD48BuOs>)
 - *Mix & Match* worksheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **human dignity**: the universal, intrinsic, and inalienable value of human persons
- **universal**: every one of us has dignity
- **intrinsic**: our dignity is part of who we are; it is with us our entire life
- **inalienable**: dignity cannot be given to us or taken away from us

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Introduce the course: This course will help us answer four questions.

Write on the board:

- (i) Who are we?
- (ii) What can we do?
- (iii) Who should we become?
- (iv) Why should we become that kind of person?

Everyone in this classroom is a human being. We all know this. But do we all know what a human being is? Understanding the human person is essential to knowing ourselves, to knowing others, and to knowing the best way to act. Over the course of these lessons, you will learn what it is to be a human person, how you can become an excellent human person, and why this will lead to a fulfilled life.

Step 2: Begin with a hook. Hand each student their own *Dear You* letter—a letter from their parent, another family member, a teacher, etc., that describes to them their own value and dignity. Give students some time to read and think about the letters that they have received.

Ask:

- How do you know the letter writer? What is your relationship with him/her?
- How does your letter make you feel?

Students could journal the answers to these questions in their notes.

Step 3: Introduce human dignity, the core concept of the course: What we experienced in this activity is our human dignity—our value as a human person. Every single person has this value, just because he or she is human!

Explain: We come to know we are valuable through the love we receive from other people. This is how we first come to recognize our own dignity. Similarly, it is through loving another that we are first made to recognize the dignity of others. When we love someone, we are not projecting our feelings onto them, rather we are responding to what is truly valuable and lovable about them. People are valuable in themselves. Our job is not to create their value but recognize and respect it.

Teach the three prongs to dignity and write them on the board:

- **universal:** every person has dignity, regardless of abilities, status, etc.
- **intrinsic:** our dignity is with us our entire life; it is part of who we are
- **inalienable:** dignity cannot be given to us or taken away from us

Explain: Human dignity helps us answer the question, “Who are we?” We are human persons who each have dignity.

We have this value always because we are human. All humans share it.

What is important also is that we can demonstrate our dignity in the ways we act and the choices we make. We can live more or less excellent lives—we can live lives of respect, or lives of disrespect, for the dignity of the person. We will learn about this in future lessons. For now, we can say that the most excellent person is the one who lives his or her life respecting human dignity in each of his or her actions.

One way that we can do this is return other's respect for us! Let's take the time to write those who wrote us a *Dear You* letter, answering for them the questions: Why do you love this person? Why is he or she valuable to you? What makes him or her special? This letter should be hand-written on lined paper.

Step 4: Review the concepts taught.

Ask:

- Do I have dignity? [yes]
- Does [student] have dignity? [yes]
- Do rocks have dignity? [no]
- Does an independent adult have dignity? [yes]
- Does a helpless, dependent baby have dignity? [yes]
- Do dogs have dignity? [no] *
- Does a business have dignity? [no]
- Does a person with a disability have dignity? [yes]
- Does committing a crime remove one's dignity? [no]

What does it mean to say that dignity is inviolable? [dignity can't be taken away]

What group of people does not have dignity? [trick question! There isn't one]

*While we love our pets, they are not human beings and so do not have human dignity. However, they do have value and ought to be loved, cared for, and respected. Harming animals in any way is a very bad way to use the freedom we possess as human beings.

Step 5: Summarize: Today we have begun to answer the question, “Who are we?” the first of the important questions posed to us in this class. We are human persons who each have dignity, the value that makes each of us special, just because we are human. We all share it, it cannot be given to us or taken from us, and it is with us for the entirety of our lives! Understanding that we have this dignity is important to understanding what we can do and who we can become.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to mail or give the dignity letter they wrote in class. (If necessary, students should complete their dignity letters at home.)

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Summarize the newspaper story about Nick Vujicic, “the man without limbs,” and explain that he shows how human dignity is a value always with us, a value not limited by looks or ability; even in being physically incapable in certain ways, he is fundamentally human and his life therefore valuable. (An alternative would be to watch the *Motivational speaker Nick Vujicic on the power of staying positive*, Channel NewsAsia video.)

Supplement 2: Raise awareness of the dignity of the person on the level of the classroom. Hand each student a copy of the *Mix & Match* worksheet. Each student should roam about the classroom asking other students if they fit the clues given. So, for example, they should ask questions like “do you have more than two siblings?”, “is your favorite color red?”, etc. If the answer is yes, they should write down the name of the person in the blank. After someone’s name has been used for one of the blanks, it cannot be used again. Give the students 10 minutes for this and then reconvene the class.

Ask:

- How does this activity make you feel?
- Did anything about what you learned surprise you?
- What are some things that you all share? Some things that make you different?

Explain: Human beings are similar and different in many ways. However, because we are all humans, one thing we all share is human dignity.

Supplement 3: Bring the experience of the dignity of the person to the level of the student’s self- reflection. Ask them to imagine themselves looking in a mirror, then to write down a list of things that another person couldn’t know about them just by looking at them—qualities of their own individual uniqueness: two experiences from their past that have made them who they are today; two things they hope/dream for; two people they love; two things they find beautiful.

Model part of your own answer to students before they begin. Upon completion, ask:

- What are some examples of things that other people can’t know about us?
- Why do you think people can’t know these things about you unless you tell them?



Name: _____

Mix & Match

Directions: Find a **different** person for each clue in the list below.

1. a person with whom you share your birthday month

2. a person who's visited another country

3. a person with more than two siblings

4. a person whose favorite color is the same as yours

5. a person who's completed a puzzle

6. a person who's taken dance classes

7. a person who was born in another state (or country)

8. a person who speaks a second language

9. a person named after a relative

10. a person who's lived in more than one house/apartment

11. a person who loves reading

12. a person who loves pizza

13. a person who eats cereal for breakfast



PURPOSE

To introduce the hierarchy of beings by explaining the basic powers which distinguish living beings from non-living beings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Name and explain the powers to eat, grow, and reproduce.
2. Identify the role these powers play in their own lives.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *The Body Plan* worksheet (see Materials)
- *My Habit Tracker* worksheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **power:** the ability of a living thing to do something on its own
- **eat:** the power to take in nourishment
- **grow:** the power to increase in size from within
- **reproduce:** the power to create another being of the same kind
- **self-mastery:** the ability to build habits that allow you to make good choices about your emotions and actions.

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Explain: Every single time that we encounter a person, no matter how mundane or unpleasant the interaction, we are encountering someone with human dignity, that is, with immeasurable worth and value.

Ask the students to come up with the three characteristics of human dignity and write what they come up with on the board. If they struggle, direct them towards the correct answers given below:

- universal: every person has dignity, regardless of abilities, status, etc.
- intrinsic: our dignity is with us our entire life; it is part of who we are
- unalienable: dignity cannot be given to us or taken away from us

All Living Beings: Powers to Eat, Grow, Reproduce

Human Dignity Curriculum – Grade 6 | Lesson 2

Step 2: Introduce the hierarchy of being with a class exercise.

Give students three minutes to gather into groups based on the number of siblings each has, from 0-x. Then ask: Does your number of siblings affect how much value you have? (No, it doesn't, because our value as persons is intrinsic.)

Then give students another three minutes to categorize themselves by birthday month, and again ask: Does your birthday month affect how much value you have? (No, it doesn't, because our value as persons is intrinsic.)

Explain that there are many ways to categorize the person, but none of them affect our value as persons. Human beings are all categorized differently from everything else in the world because of the special value they possess: the value of human dignity.

Step 3: Teach the powers of living beings.

Help students identify the existence of powers, which all living beings share; they distinguish living from non-living beings. Ask: What distinguishes living beings from non-living beings? Take answers, then teach the powers: What distinguishes living beings from non-living things is the presence of powers. All living beings have different powers.

Write on the board:

- **power:** the ability of a living thing to do something on its own

Explain: Non-living beings are unable to do anything on their own; they have no powers.

Make a table of powers per living being on the board and complete it as a class. Students should copy this table into their notes. It will be a helpful guide as we continue to explore the hierarchy of beings in depth.

	plants	animals	humans
POWERS			
eat	X	x	x
grow	X	x	x
reproduce	X	x	x
move from place to place on their own		x	x
use the senses		x	x
feel emotions		x	x
think			x
choose			x

All Living Beings: Powers to Eat, Grow, Reproduce

Human Dignity Curriculum – Grade 6 | Lesson 2

Step 4: Teach the three shared powers of living beings. Write on the board:

- **eat:** the power to take in nourishment
- **grow:** the power to increase in size from within
- **reproduce:** the power to create another being of the same kind

Summarize: All plants, animals, and humans have these three basic powers that make living and survival possible: the power to eat, grow, and reproduce. These three powers affect the way these living beings exist. Since plants, animals, and humans have to eat in order to live, for example, their existence is different from the existence of non-living things, such as rocks, which don't have to eat and don't have any of the powers that make life possible.

Step 5: Show how these powers manifest in the student's lives

Explain: Just like plants and animals, human beings eat, grow, and reproduce. You have been eating and growing ever since you were a baby! However, human beings exercise these powers a little differently than they do. When an animal sees something to eat, it will eat it no matter what as long as it is hungry. Human beings, on the other hand, can decide what and how to eat. For lunch you can decide to eat a sandwich or ice cream. Eating one of these foods is more excellent, because it is the healthier option.

Activity: Write and label three columns on the board, and as a class brainstorm actions that students can do, under each column, to care for their bodies in an excellent way.

eating	exercising	sleeping

Note: "Growing" habits can and should fall under any of the three categories.

Then ask each student to complete a *The Body Plan* worksheet by choosing the necessary habits for taking excellent care of their bodies, and then writing out a step-by-step plan to combine all of them into their life over the course of a week. Students should also identify challenges.

Write on the board:

- **self-mastery:** the ability to build habits that allow you to make good choices about your emotions and actions.

Explain: Eating is a power that human beings have, and it is good. Without the ability to eat we would be unable to grow and survive. However, this power can be abused. We can for example make an unhealthy decision and eat a bowl of ice cream instead of our dinner. This is where self-mastery comes in. Self-mastery allows us to engage in the power to eat in the right way, to the right extent, in the right place, and at the right time. Exerting self-mastery is a major component to achieving human excellence.

All Living Beings: Powers to Eat, Grow, Reproduce

Human Dignity Curriculum – Grade 6 | Lesson 2

Ask students to gather into groups of 3, and to brainstorm with each other a plan of action for each students' biggest challenge to putting his plan into action.

If time permits, take students' plans for overcoming their challenges with the whole class.

Step 5: Summarize: We learned today that the existence of powers separates non-living things from living beings. All living beings, humans included, have the three powers characteristic to them: the powers to eat, grow, and reproduce. In addition to using our powers for survival, we also use them to express the value of eating, growing, reproducing—all of these experiences that make us who we are as human persons.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to track their success in developing a habit using the *My Habit Tracker* worksheet.

This documentation may contribute to the class' final **Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC)** newspaper project (see lesson 7). (Students could write an article regarding their success/failure in changing their habits to submit to the final project or individual evaluation).

SUPPLEMENTS

None.



Name: _____

The Body Plan

Directions: List the necessary choices you need to keep your body healthy, and then write how you will practice these choices in the table below.

Bad habits I want to break

eating	exercising	sleeping
_____	_____	_____

Good habits I want to make

eating	exercising	sleeping
_____	_____	_____

During the week, I will practice:

1. this habit: _____

2. by making the following choices: _____

During the weekend, I will practice:

1. this habit: _____

2. by making the following choices: _____

Directions: Identify two challenges that you expect to face in putting your plan for a healthy body into action.

1. _____

2. _____



My Habit Tracker

Name: _____

Directions: Choose a habit you will work to develop. It is estimated that it takes a person approximately 66 days to develop a new habit: for the next two months, check the box if you practice the habit you have chosen.

The habit I will work to develop: _____

Once you decide on a habit, talk to your parents/guardians, and ask them to come up with two steps they will take to help you accomplish your goal at home.

**Two steps my parents/guardians
will take to help me:**

day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
progress											
day	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
progress											
day	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
progress											
day	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
progress											
day	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55
progress											
day	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66
progress											



PURPOSE

To continue exploring the hierarchy of beings by explaining the power of sensation which distinguishes humans and animals from plants.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Name and explain the external and internal senses.
2. Understand how these senses reveal information about the world around us.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- blindfold
- *Review Quiz* sheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **external senses**: the ability to see, smell, taste, hear, touch
- **internal senses**: the ways by which the body stores, develops, and adds to information gathered by its external senses
- **sensation**: the power to use the body to discover the world around us
- **memory**: the ability to retain knowledge gained through the senses
- **imagination**: the ability to picture things in the mind that are not immediately before us
- **instinct**: the ability to recognize the appropriate response to a particular situation

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson

Ask for three volunteers to come up to the board and write one of the three powers that all living beings possess along with its definition:

eat: the power to take in nourishment

grow: the power to increase in size from within

reproduce: the power to create another being of the same kind

Step 2: Introduce the external senses

Explain: Humans and animals share several powers that plants do not. Today we will talk about one of those powers: sensation

Write on the board:

- **sensation:** the power to use the body to discover the world around us

The senses all help us to learn about our surroundings. These senses are divided into two kinds: external and internal. Our external senses gather data from the external world. There are five of them:

- **Seeing**
- **Hearing**
- **Smelling**
- **Tasting**
- **Touching**

Activity: Ask students to gather in groups of 3-4. Give groups 3 minutes to brainstorm a list of all possible experiences for each of the 5 external senses that they associate with the season of winter [or another topic of the teacher's choosing], then rotate quickly per group, reading answers aloud to see which group came up with the longest list of original answers. Repeat answers do not count for points.

Step 3: Have students engage with the three internal senses.

Activity: Play “Blind Man’s Bluff” with students. For safety, move any obstacles that someone could trip over. Choose one student to wear the blindfold. The student has to wander the room until they find another student. Once they touch another student, they are to guess who they think they have found. If they are correct, the student they found gets to be blindfolded next. If they are incorrect, they get to be blindfolded one more time. If they are wrong a second time, they get to choose who is to be blindfolded next.

Once students complete the game, list the four internal senses on the board, explain the sense’s definition, and then have students explain how they used each internal sense in “Blind’s Man Bluff.”

- **memory:** the ability to remember knowledge gained through the senses

Our memory stores our knowledge. For example, we remember our last family reunion, and who from our family was missing. Or we remember what we ate for lunch yesterday. All of the details about our lunch – the color of our apple, the crunch of the carrots, the texture of the peanut butter – our external senses picked up first and our memory now brings back to our minds.

[memory should have served helpful in recalling the placement of obstacles in the classroom, etc.]

- **imagination:** the ability to picture things in the mind that are not immediately before us

Our imagination allows us to experience again something even when it is no longer present. We can imagine things that we have never experienced. When we learn about dinosaurs, we imagine the different dinosaurs and the way they lived based on descriptions we've read and images we've seen.

[imagination should have served helpful in figuring out how to operate within the classroom, etc.]

- **instinct:** the ability to recognize the appropriate response to a particular situation

Our instincts help control what we do in particular situations. For example, when we sense we are in danger, like when a car is driving toward us at a very quick speed, we automatically turn toward safety.

[instinct should have served helpful in avoiding obstacles in the classroom, etc.]

Gather for a classroom discussion. Ask:

- How did we use each of these senses?
- How could we have used them better?

If time permits, play the game again.

Step 4: Teach the role of the senses in growing toward human excellence.

Explain: Our internal senses help guide our relationship with the world. Instinct, for example, keeps us from danger if danger is occurring. We can develop and use all of these internal senses on our path toward growing in excellence.

Example: Now we can apply all of this to the real world! Let's say that we receive a new calculator from our parents at the start of the school year, and we know that it was on the more expensive side. One day we come home, ready to get to our math homework, and we realize that the calculator isn't in our backpack—we have lost it.

Ask: How can we use our memory, imagination, and instinct in order to come up with a plan to find it? Model your own answers for the students, then work together to brainstorm tactics.

If time permits, propose another scenario: You are chosen to be the “seeker” during a game of hide-and-seek in your grandparents’ backyard, where you’ve played hide-and-seek dozens of times before. Some new neighborhood kids have chosen to join you.

Ask: How do we use our memory, imagination, and instinct in order to play the game well? Model your own answers for the students, then work together to brainstorm tactics.

Step 5: Summarize: Today we learned about sensation, one of the powers that distinguish humans and animals from plants. This power is split into two parts: external and internal. External senses have direct access to the world around us. Internal senses store, organize, and develop the information gathered by our external senses. All of these senses can contribute in being excellent human beings.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Have the students take the *Review Quiz* sheet home to complete.

SUPPLEMENTS

No supplements.



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Review Quiz

My Name: _____

Match the definitions to their correct quality of human dignity.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. intrinsic | every person has dignity |
| 2. inviolable | we have dignity just because we're human |
| 3. universal | our dignity cannot be given us or taken from us |



Human
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Review Quiz

My Name: _____

Match the definitions to their correct quality of human dignity.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. intrinsic | every person has dignity |
| 2. inviolable | we have dignity just because we're human |
| 3. universal | our dignity cannot be given us or taken from us |

List the things you have eaten today.

List one way you used your sense of touch.

List one way you used your sense of sight.

List one emotion you felt, and what happened to cause it.

List the things you have eaten today.

List one way you used your sense of touch.

List one way you used your sense of sight.

List one emotion you felt, and what happened to cause it.



PURPOSE

To teach the emotions and the role they play in humans and animals responding to the world around them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize how emotions play an essential role in how they respond to the world around them.
2. Understand the different kinds of emotions.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Emotions Charades* flashcards (see Materials)
- *Faces of Emotion* images
 - Henri Matisse, “Dance II” (1909-1910); Roy Lichtenstein, “Frighten Girl” (1966); Pablo Picasso, “The Weeping Woman” (1937); Marc Chagall, “Birthday” (1915); Roy Lichtenstein, “Grrrrrrrrrrrr!!” (1965); Marc Chagall, “The Promenade” (1917); Grant Wood, “American Gothic” (1930)
- *Emotions Chart* worksheet (see Materials)
- Supplementary materials:
 - *Sorrow, The National* audio
 - *Beethoven 9th Symphony 4th Movement (Ode to Joy)* audio

VOCABULARY

- **emotions:** automatic responses to either the body or the world
- **bodily:** these emotions are responding to some state of our body, i.e. hunger, pain
- **automatic:** we are not in control of our emotions, so they are neither good or bad; we do, however, control the way we express them
- **directional:** these emotions are responding to things out in the world

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Explain: In the last lesson, we learned about our internal senses, with which we learn about and relate to the world.

Have student think of their favorite memory. It can be a special birthday, a day at the beach, a family vacation, or anything else that comes to mind. Then have the students close their eyes and spend a few moments imagining the moment.

Ask: How can memory and imagination work together like this to help us become excellent?

Step 2: Introduce emotions with a class exercise. Call up student volunteers one-by-one and ask them to portray an emotion listed on the *Emotions Charades* flashcards. If the class doesn't guess the emotion within a minute, rotate students.

With each correct guess, ask: How did you make the guess you made?

Step 3: Teach emotions.

Explain: We know that our external senses pick up data about the world and learned that our internal senses help us process and use that data in different ways. In our bodies, as we gather and process sense information, we also *feel* reactions to the things we learn. These reactions are called our emotions. They guide our existence in the world, and for humans especially, they affect the choices we make and how we understand our lives.

Write on the board:

- **emotions:** automatic responses to either the body or the world
- **bodily:** these emotions are responding to some state of our body, i.e. hunger, pain
- **automatic:** we are not in control of our emotions, so they are neither good or bad; we do, however, control the way we express them
- **directional:** these emotions are responding to things out in the world

Some emotions are responding to things we experience in our bodies, whereas other emotions are responding to things we experience in the world. Write the emotion charts on the board:

bodily emotions	directional emotions
pain	fear
pleasure	joy

Bodily emotions give us important information to help us keep our bodies healthy. For example, hunger tells us that our body is hungry, and we need to eat something. Pain tells us that our body is hurt or ill and we need to go to the doctor. Without these it would be much harder to keep our body in excellent shape.

Directional emotions, on the other hand, respond to things in the world outside of our bodies. For example, when we see a tiger while alone in the middle of the jungle, we feel fear. We are afraid that the tiger might attack us. On the other hand, when we get our test back and discover we got an A+, we feel great happiness and joy. These emotions help us to automatically relate to things in the world in a particular way.

Ask:

- When have you felt pain?
 - Why did you feel it in that moment?
 - How did you respond to it?
- When have you felt pleasure?
 - Why did you feel it in that moment?
 - How did you respond to it?
- When have you felt joy?
 - Why did you feel it in that moment?
 - How did you respond to it?
- When have you felt fear?
 - Why did you feel it in that moment?
 - How did you respond to it?

Step 4: Introduce how human beings respond to emotions

Explain: Emotions themselves are not good or bad. They are neutral in themselves. What can be good or bad is *how* we respond to our emotions. Take the example of fear. There are some things that we fear for good reason. For example, the above example of the tiger. In this case it makes sense to listen to our fear and try to get away from a dangerous animal in order to keep ourselves safe. However, there are other cases where fear could prevent us from doing something we should do, like if we are afraid to make new friends in a new place. In this case we should act to overcome our fear because it is good to make new friends, even if it can be scary sometimes.

Search for the *Faces of Emotion* images. Print or project them images for the students.

For each image, ask:

- What is the emotion felt or expressed?
- How do you know? What signs in the painting indicate this emotion?

Finally, ask students to choose one of the faces shown, and to imagine themselves in the place of a character portrayed. Have them write a short paragraph describing the situation surrounding this emotional response and the relevant details. Then, drawing upon this paragraph, students should write a letter from the perspective of this character, to articulate the emotion felt, possible reasons for it and what would be the best way to act in response.

Step 5: Summarize: In the past lessons, we have begun to learn about the human person—who he is, and what he can do. We have seen that the human person shares certain powers with all living things. Now we have also seen excellent ways of using our internal senses,

and excellent ways of demonstrating emotions.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Give students the *Emotions Chart* worksheet. Ask them to identify the positive and negative emotion they experience the most, to track when they experience it, and to reflect on whether they express it in a way that respects their own and others' human dignity.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Prompt in the students an emotional reaction, then discuss with the following questions. Play the *Sorrow, The National* audio or the *Beethoven* audio, asking students to close their eyes and listen.

Note: Teacher should customize music selection as necessary.

Discussion questions:

- What do you think of the music? What emotion did you feel? How did your body react?
- What experience of value does the song express? What emotions?
- Will the emotions that you're experiencing last forever?

Summarize: With the *Sorrow, The National* audio, we may have felt sadness. This sadness, like every other emotion felt, indicates something about the world. Here, the National singers are expressing their sorrow about lost love. They took their emotion and poured it out into a piece of art in order to express it. With the *Beethoven* audio, we may have felt great joy and happiness. The sequence is called Ode to Joy because of how it testifies to those special moments when we are very happy.

charades:

love

charades:

joy

charades:

hate

charades:

sadness

charades:

anger

charades:

despair

charades:

hope

charades:

fear



Name: _____

Emotions Chart

Directions: Circle below one “positive” and one “negative” emotion which you experience most often. Then, track the next three instances in which you feel either emotion. For each instance, explain what triggered the emotion, what you thought about, and whether you expressed your emotion in a way that respected the dignity of all the persons involved.

love joy hope hate sadness despair anger fear

What happened to trigger the emotion?	What did you do about or with the emotion?
Example: Joy: <i>My grandma called me to wish me happy birthday.</i>	<i>I felt a lot of adrenaline, and a lot of peace. And I laughed so hard that my belly hurt. Afterwards, I thanked my grandma for calling me and told my mom about it.</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



PURPOSE

To distinguish human persons from the remainder of living beings with their power to think.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize the power to think about their lives and choices as the key to human excellence.
2. Apply this power to think to problem-solving.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Power Structures* handout (see Materials)
- *Identity* worksheet (see Materials)
- *The Mangoes Problem* worksheet (see Materials)
- *The Mangoes Problem Solution* sheet (see Materials)
- *Riddles* worksheet (see Materials)
- *Riddles Solutions* sheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

No new vocabulary.

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson. Have the students come up with a list of as many different emotions as they can. Have them think about those emotions which are more complicated than mere happiness or sadness. After having them come up with a list, ask how many of them they have experienced in the last few days and what occurred.

Step 2: Introduce the power to think.

Name a few excellent historical figures and ask students to identify two excellent actions each historical figure may have taken. [i.e., Martin Luther King, Jr.; Joan of Arc; Mohandas “Mahatma” Gandhi; Anne Frank]

Then brainstorm as a class a list of things that human persons can *be* that animals or plants can't be. Ask each student to give a brief explanation of what is distinctly human about their answer. [i.e., teacher, doctor, researcher, football player, politician, leader]

Then brainstorm as a class a list of things that human persons can *do* that animals or plants can't do. [i.e., write, read, compose, drive, photograph, pray]

Give each student a *Power Structures* handout.

Explain: The reason that human persons are able to become these different kinds of people and create these things which we have listed has to do with the unique human power to think and to know—to know who we want to become and what we want to do. All the listed items require this power, which neither animals nor plants have.

The power to think helps us to know many things, including abstract ideas and values, such as human dignity, love, justice, equality, and personal identity. Ask each student to complete a copy of the *Identity* worksheet, identifying their talents, values, goals, and more.

Ask:

- How does your identity compare to another person's?
- How does your identity compare to the identity of an animal?

Step 3: Apply the power to think.

Read students *The Mangoes Problem*. In groups of 3-4, students should discuss a problem-solving strategy first, and then receive a copy of the sheet in order to solve the problem together.

Ask:

- How did you plan to solve this problem?
- How did you work together to solve it?
- What could you have done better?

Explain: With our power to think, we can look at a problem, examine it from different angles, and determine the best approach to solving it. This unique power also allows us to look at our own selves and understand the dignity of every person, to see that this dignity is best expressed in an excellent life—a life in which we respect our own dignity and the dignity of others with every choice taken.

The Human Person: The Power to Think

Human Dignity Curriculum – Grade 6 | Lesson 4A

We can think about who we want to become, and why we want to become that; we can know what we value; and we can think about the particular actions that we need to take in order to get there, growing in excellence along the way. We can also use this power to reflect on our past choices.

Step 4: Summarize: Today, we looked at the human person’s power to think, and the way that it distinguishes the human person from all other living beings. With this power, we can understand and respect our own dignity and that of others, and can think about the ways in which the decisions we make in our lives can put us on this path toward excellence. As human persons, we can thus be or do a whole range of excellent things for ourselves, for others, and for the world!

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

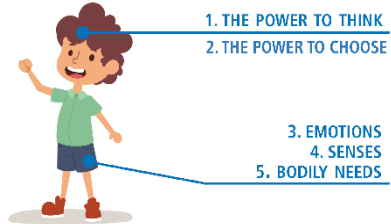
Each student should receive a copy of the *Riddles* worksheet, and complete as many of the listed riddles as possible.

SUPPLEMENTS

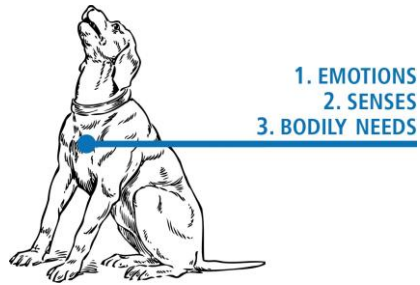
None.

power structures

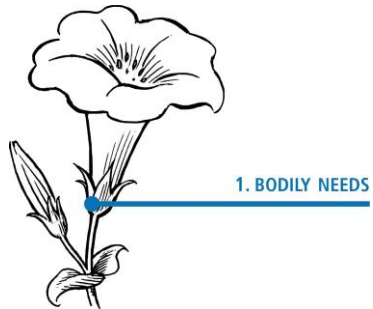
the human person



animals



plants

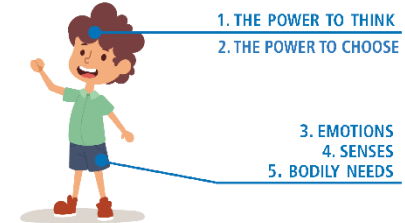


Images: WYA (top); public domain
(middle, bottom)

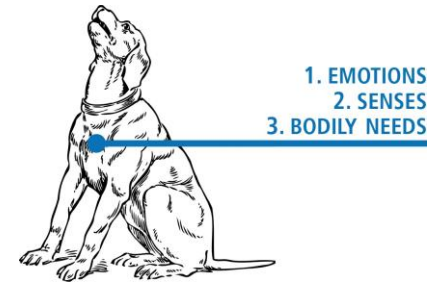
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power structures

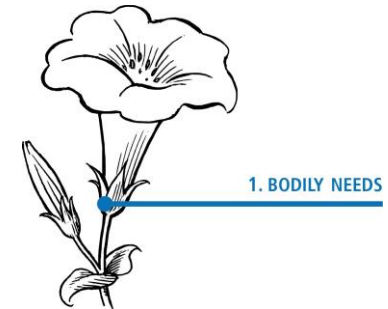
the human person



animals



plants



Images: WYA (top); public domain
(middle, bottom)

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Directions: List an answer for each prompt below.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Identity

1. three people I care for:

2. a friend who demonstrates human excellence for me:

3. three life goals of mine:

4. language(s) I want to speak:

5. my top three favorite places:

6. one tradition my family has:

7. one good habit I learned at home:

8. something beautiful I made:

9. the most difficult good choice I've made:

10. three words to describe me:

11. if I could write a book, it would be about:

12. my favorite subject at school:

13. the person I want to be:

14. five things I have to do to become that person:



The Mangoes Problem

Directions: Read, and then work with a group to complete, the following problem.

One night the King couldn't sleep, so he went down into the Royal kitchen, where he found a bowl full of mangoes. Being hungry, he took $\frac{1}{6}$ of the mangoes.

Later that same night, the Queen was hungry and couldn't sleep. She, too, found the mangoes and took $\frac{1}{5}$ of what the King had left.

Still later, the first Prince awoke, went to the kitchen, and ate $\frac{1}{4}$ of the remaining mangoes. Even later, his brother, the second Prince, ate $\frac{1}{3}$ of what was then left.

Finally, the third Prince ate $\frac{1}{2}$ of what was left, leaving only three mangoes for the servants. How many mangoes were originally in the bowl?



The Mangoes Problem Solution

Since the King removed $(1/6)x$, then $x - (1/6)x$ mangoes are left after his removal. Thus, $(5/6)x$ mangoes are left.

The Queen removed one-fifth of $(5/6)x$, so $(5/6)x - (1/5)(5/6)x$, or $(4/6)x$, mangoes are left after her removal.

The first Prince removed one-fourth of $(4/6)x$ mangoes, so $(4/6)x - (1/4)(4/6)x$, or $(3/6)x$, mangoes are left after the first Prince's removal.

The second Prince removed one-third of $(3/6)x$, so $(3/6)x - (1/3)(3/6)x$, or $(2/6)x$, mangoes are left.

Finally, the third Prince removed one-half of $(2/6)x$, leaving 3 mangoes, so $(2/6)x - (1/2)(2/6)x = 1/6x = 3$. Solving $1/6x = 3$ results in $x = 18$.



Riddles

- 1) **Why is six afraid of seven?**

- 2) **Divide 110 into two parts so that one will be 150 percent of the other. What are the 2 numbers?**

- 3) **There are a mix of red, green and blue balls in a bag. The total number of balls is 60. There are four times as many red balls as green balls and 6 more blue balls than green balls. How many balls of each color are there?**

- 4) **How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?**

1) Why is six afraid of seven?

Answer: Because seven eight nine!

2) Divide 110 into two parts so that one will be 150 percent of the other. What are the 2 numbers?

Answer: 44 and 66.

3) There are a mix of red, green and blue balls in a bag. The total number of balls is 60. There are four times as many red balls as green balls and 6 more blue balls than green balls. How many balls of each color are there?

Answer: Blue balls = 15; Red balls = 36; Green balls = 9

4) How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?

Answer: After the first calculation, you will be subtracting 5 from 20, then 5 from 15, and so on.



PURPOSE

To distinguish human persons from the remainder of living beings with their power to choose.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize that intentional actions have a deliberately creative power.
2. Identify intentional actions they can take to affirm their and others' human dignity.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Pay It Forward* worksheet (see Materials)
- Supplementary materials:
 - o *Kindness Boomerang – “One Day”* video
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>)

VOCABULARY

- **intentional action:** an action chosen knowingly
- **non-intentional action:** an action taken without any free choice

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Ask:

- What are some things we can do, with our power to think, that animals or plants can't do?

Now, brainstorm: Think of some things every day about which we make choices that animals or plants don't. Make a list with the class on the board.

Step 2: Introduce the power to choose with a class brainstorm. List the following activities on the board in two columns:

blinking as a camera flash goes off
offending a friend with a silly joke
screaming at a sudden movement

biting your tongue instead of criticizing
offering to help a friend with a project
planning a surprise party for your mom

Guide students to identify a difference between the first three—non-chosen—and the last three—chosen—actions.

Ask:

- What is the difference between these two columns?

Then, as a class, brainstorm two additional choices for each of these two columns.

Explain: There are certain actions and certain consequences that we do not freely choose to make happen. We call these non-intentional actions. Then, there are those actions we do choose—actions that begin within us, with some kind of understanding of the consequences to them that may follow. We call those intentional actions.

Step 4: Teach the creative power of action: The most important thing to remember about our power to choose is that, when used with intention and purpose, it has amazing power to “create” in the world in accordance with what we envision as individual persons.

We can choose to make changes to our bodies, to our traits, to the way we spend our time; we can choose the way we relate to other people, and the way that we help or don’t help them; the way that we interact with the world around us. Each action that we take generates an effect in the world, and every action affects us because it contributes to developing our pattern of actions.

Tell the story of Trevor McKinney, a character from a novel titled *Pay It Forward* by Catherine Ryan Hyde, to illustrate the creative power of human actions.

Trevor McKinney is a seventh grader in Las Vegas. His social studies teacher gave the class an assignment: to put into action a plan that will make the world a better place.

Trevor comes up with a plan he calls “Pay It Forward”: whoever receives a favor has to do a favor for three other people rather than pay back the original one. These new favors have to be major favors that the person who receives them cannot have accomplished alone. Trevor puts this plan into action by using his power to think to identify needs among the people around him. First Trevor lets Jerry, a homeless man, live in his garage. Jerry later does car repairs for Trevor’s mother, then talks to a suicidal woman who is about to jump off the bridge.

The pay-it-forward project grows into a network of people doing good things for others, until, after a series of interactions among many, many people, a man even gives away his car to a journalist in Los Angeles who is in a car accident. In the end, Trevor defends his

friend Adam against bullies who have ganged up on him, and gets inadvertently stabbed in the abdomen by one of them. At the vigil held for Trevor's death, hundreds of recipients of pay-it-forward favors show up to pay their respects: an exponentially great effect, that started with one seventh grader!

Discussion questions:

- What specific actions did the people in the story take to pay it forward?
- How do these actions show respect for the people for whom they are committed?
- How does this story demonstrate the power excellent human choices?

If time permits, show the *Kindness Boomerang – “One Day”* video.

Step 5: Place students on the path of personal mission.

Ask students to complete the *Pay It Forward* worksheet. Students should then gather in pairs or groups of three, and share with each other their ideas for paying-it-forward, and their plans for respecting the dignity of others.

Step 6: Summarize: In the last lesson, we started to learn about the power to think, which is the first power that is unique to human persons. With our power to think, we know ideas, values, ourselves, and the world around us in great detail. Today we have looked at the second power in human persons that distinguishes us from all other living beings—the power to choose, with which we take actions in the world.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to put one of their pay-it-forward ideas into action over the next week, and then to look for and bring to class for the next lesson a news article about another's act of kindness or generosity.

These articles may contribute to the class' final **Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC)** newspaper project (see lesson 7).

SUPPLEMENTS

No supplements.



Human
Dignity
Curriculum

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pay It Forward

Directions: List an answer for each prompt below.

three people to whom I will pay it forward with an act of kindness:

1.

2.

3.

three acts of kindness I could do:

choose one person, and one act of kindness, and create a plan of action to pay it forward:

Grade 6, L2B - The Power to Choose



Human
Dignity
Curriculum

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pay It Forward

Directions: List an answer for each prompt below.

three people to whom I will pay it forward with an act of kindness:

1.

2.

3.

three acts of kindness I could do:

choose one person, and one act of kindness, and create a plan of action to pay it forward:



PURPOSE

To demonstrate that the human person is always free to choose excellence.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Understand that intentional choices can be either excellent or non-excellent.
2. Direct their power to choose toward excellence.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Role-Playing Scenario* sheet (see Materials)
- *Gandhi – Human Rights Activist* video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ept8hwPQQNg>)

VOCABULARY

- **freedom for excellence:** the capacity to always desire human excellence and act to attain it

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Ask students to report on the success of their pay it forward actions, or to share the act of kindness/generosity they discovered in a news story.

Step 2: Introduce freedom for excellence with a student exercise.

Write the following two statements on the board. Ask students to write out how the statements make them feel.

“You’re so kind.”

“You’re so ugly.”

Gather for a classroom discussion. Ask:

- How does the first statement make you feel? Why?
- How does the second statement make you feel? Why?
- Is one more excellent than another? Why or why not?

Do the same exercise with the following two statements.

“When you assumed that I lied to you, you hurt my feelings. It wasn’t kind.”

“I’m so glad that you swiped money from your mom to pay for my field trip.”

Gather for a classroom discussion. Ask:

- How does the first statement make you feel? Why?
- How does the second statement make you feel? Why?
- Is one more excellent than another? Why or why not?
- What role do emotions have in choosing excellence?

Step 3: Teach freedom for excellence.

Explain: There is a very important element to our power to choose. In one way, we can use our power to choose to do whatever we want—such as to say mean things that can damage a person; or to do something illegal and potentially dangerous, like running a red light at a traffic stop. This is not, however, what our power to choose is meant for.

The mission of the person is to respect human dignity in us and others and to grow in excellence! This means that, with every choice we make, we should choose between all the options we have—choose that which best respects human dignity and helps us grow in excellence! This is what it means to be **free for excellence**.

Role-play with students. Gather a pair of student volunteers in pairs and assign them the *Role-Playing Scenario*. They should perform this scenario in front of the class.

Ask:

- What choices were made during this role-play? What choices were not made?
- Were the choices excellent? Why or why not?
- What would you have done in this situation?

Step 4: Help students prepare to grow in excellence. Write on the board:

- **integrity:** the state of being whole or undivided

Explain: What a life of integrity requires is that we make all of our choices based on what we value and based on what our powers allow for us—that everything that we say, do, and choose correctly reflects who we are! We don’t only exercise when our friends do, or don’t only study when our parents are around. We should make these choices out of a personal desire to grow in excellence.

Group students in groups of 2-3 and propose to them the following scenario: You three all try out for the school basketball team and promise yourselves before try-outs that either all three of you will be on the team, or none of you will. The coach praises you all during try-outs, both in private and in front of the crowd, and you are so excited—but, when the day for announcing teammates comes up, only two of you make the team.

Ask:

- What should acting with integrity look like in this situation? What should you do?
- How should you talk about this?
- What do you think your coach would say? Your teachers? Your parents?
- What would you do if you were chosen as a member? What if you were the one who wasn't?

[The student should be humble and compassionate to their friend and not rub in the fact that they made the team when their friend did not.]

Step 5: Summarize: In the last lesson, we looked at the difference between two types of actions in the human person—intentional actions, those actions that a person chooses, or non-intentional actions, those actions that a person doesn't choose. Today we have seen that there are two types of actions that a person can choose—excellent or non-excellent actions. While we are able to choose either, our mission and the human dignity we all possess should compel us to always choose the most excellent thing, in respect of that dignity and in the pursuit of human excellence!

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to choose someone they know who has passed away, who lived a life of integrity— and ask them to write a eulogy for this person, demonstrating the qualities of this life. The alternative would be for them to write a eulogy for themselves, thinking of actions they would want to take in order to demonstrate integrity in their life.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Watch the *Gandhi* video.

Ask:

- How does Gandhi exhibit human excellence?
- How did Gandhi's excellent actions lead to change around the world?



Role-Playing Scenarios

Directions: Prepare two students to role-play under these circumstances.

Student #1

You've gone home right after school to study for a big Honors Algebra test tomorrow. You need to get a B or higher in order to raise your class grade to an A-, which your parents will require of you if they're going to give you money to go on a summer mission trip. You know you'll have to study a lot in order to get this grade. Student #2 is your best friend--and he calls while you're studying.

Student #2

Student #1 is your best friend--you call them, and ask them to come over and play video games/watch a movie. When Student #1 says no, because s/he has to study, you play the blame game: *You're not really my best friend, then! If you really cared, you would come over and play.*



PURPOSE

To underline the human power to create.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize that the power to create allows human persons to rise above their body.
2. Cooperate in their use of the power to create.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *The Pitch* worksheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **art**: a work created by a human person with the intent to express or capture what is good and beautiful, or to capture human experience or emotion.
- **culture**: the way of life for a society, including its beliefs and values
- **technology**: applied scientific knowledge
- **creativity**: the ability to generate or recognize ideas and possibilities to solve problems, communicate, or entertain ourselves and others

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Have students list in their notes one excellent and one non- excellent choice of theirs from the past week, and to break both down, answering the questions:

- Why did I make this choice?
- Is there anything I could have done differently in this situation? Why or why not?

Step 2: Introduce the human power to create. Write on the board:

- **art**: a work created by a human person with the intent to express, stir, and uplift the human spirit, or show some emotion or reality

- **culture:** the individual or collective expression of a society, including its beliefs and values
- **technology:** applied scientific knowledge

Ask students to write the definitions in their notes, and then to write one example of each form of creativity that they can find at home, and one example each that they can find at school.

Model your own answer on the board before they begin. [i.e., art—a copy of Leonardo da Vinci’s “Mona Lisa”; culture—Nigerian tribal wear for special occasions; technology—a toaster]

Explain: We have seen the way the human person is structured, with our unique powers to think, with which we know, and to choose, with which we act. These two powers determine our choices about our senses, our emotions, and our bodies! What we now want to be very clear about is the human power to create—our power of creativity, with which we generate ideas, solve problems, communicate, and entertain ourselves. This power of creativity, in art, culture, and technology, shows in a very powerful way how the person is more than his body—and is this way entirely distinct from animals and plants.

Step 3: Prepare students to use their power to create.

Set-up the following activity: You are students at this school! As human persons, you have the special powers to think and choose, and with these powers, the power to create—to create even something beautiful and good and excellent at your school. Today we are going to have a free-for-all activity during which we get to brainstorm something fun and special: If you could introduce any new gadget here at school, to improve something about the way the school runs, what gadget would you introduce?

Hand each student a copy of *The Pitch* worksheet, and ask them to complete it, answering the selected questions as they brainstorm. This worksheet has a series of questions designed to help the students brainstorm what their gadget will be, how it will be useful for the school, and what steps are needed to create it.

Step 4: Help students prepare to create with each other. Write on the board:

- **humility:** the ability to know one’s self, and recognize both gifts and limits.

Explain: One of the traits that we can work to acquire is humility. As human beings, we have the power to build and create. This power can be used to accomplish great things; however, it can also be used to accomplish very evil things. If we get carried away, we can use our power to create to pursue our own selfish desires at the expense of others. Humility helps us keep in mind that we are only human and that we need others. It reminds us to work for the common good when we are using our power to create in the world.

The Human Person: The Power to Create

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Ask students to share their completed ideas with each other in groups of four, and discuss the different ways they could help each other to put into action their proposals for new gadgets— different skills or gifts they have, or different kinds of preparations they would need in order to put their project into action.

Step 5: Summarize: Today we have learned further about the way in which the human powers to think and choose operate to allow us to create. We can create in many different ways, including art, cultural traditions, and technology—for ourselves and for others.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Students should research one gadget or technological innovation that has improved the quality of life for people in the world, and complete a 5-7 sentence paragraph that explains the technology and the purposes it serves.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Portray the importance of the power to think with some of the world’s most important discoveries and underline the value that we attribute to them.

Discovery #1:

The earliest archaeological evidence of a wheel exists from about 3500 B.C.E. in Mesopotamia. It was used in the making of pots. It took another 300 years before people reasoned that the wheel could also help move things. Wheels were first simple logs, used as rollers, before the development of axles. By 2000 B.C.E. there are records of wheeled chariots used for transportation throughout Egypt.

Today, many modern mechanical devices use the wheel in some way—from cars, buses, and bicycles, to factory machines, toys, wristwatches, movie reels and more.

Discussion question:

- Why was the discovery of the wheel of value to human persons?

Discovery #2:

The human understanding of the brain has changed significantly over the centuries. It wasn't until the development of more complex imaging systems in the 20th century that it became possible for scientists to examine different parts of the brain in systematic, comprehensive ways.

For a long time, research on the way that stress affects our brain focused on receptors where the nervous and hormonal systems meet. This research suggested that significant levels of stress caused shrinkage in the brain and that therefore stress should be considered problematic. Research in the early 1990s suggested, however, that this damage was not permanent—because the brain has a built-in capacity to adapt to stressors and to remodel its architecture, even into old age. As a result, there are healthy levels of stress that contribute to healthy changes in the brain, and there are other forms of damage that the brain can overcome. The process of remodeling in the brain is now known as “neuroplasticity.”

Discussion question:

- Why is this a discovery that might be of value to human persons? [Teacher answers: We learn more about how the brain works; this helps us to work with the brain in understanding good and bad stress, the importance of rest and activity, and ways to help support healthy brain development over time.]



YOU HAVE JUST THIS ONE
SHEET OF PAPER TO PITCH
THIS PROJECT TO ME AND
CONVINCE ME THAT IT'S
WORTH DOING. SO MAKE
IT GOOD!

the PITCH

Directions: Complete the questions below as you pitch your gadget or technological innovation.

THE GADGET IDEA:

WAYS THIS GADGET WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SCHOOL:

PEOPLE YOU'LL NEED ON YOUR TEAM:

TWO CHALLENGES YOU EXPECT:

PURPOSE

To aspire to become a hero.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Understand that a hero is one who consistently makes excellent choices.
2. Imitate a personal hero's traits.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- ***Who Do I Want to Be?*** worksheet (see Materials)
- Supplementary materials:
 - o ***The Shoestring Philanthropist, Parade*** article
(<https://parade.com/48501/lindaarking/19-the-shoestring-philanthropist/>)

VOCABULARY

- **hero:** a person who consistently makes excellent choices
- **patience:** the ability to endure present difficulties for a good end or outcome

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Ask volunteer students to present the gadget or technology innovation that they researched, including one way it has contributed to advancement.

Then explain: We have spent this class learning who we are as human persons. We have learned that we each possess human dignity, our unique value as persons, alongside our powers to think and choose.

Ask students: How do we know when a person is excellent?

[through observing the excellent decisions they make]

Step 2: Teach the three markers of heroes, writing the definition and then the markers on the board:

- **hero:** a person who consistently makes excellent choices

1. Heroes live lives set apart from others.

Heroes are rare—because it is rare to find someone who has never stopped trying to live in an excellent way. Because heroes are rare, we consider them extraordinary people: those who have lived their lives beyond ordinary ways. But all of us are called to be heroes and all of us can be heroic in our lives.

2. Heroes don't settle or make exceptions when it comes to excellent choices.

The key to becoming a hero lies in never settling for something less than excellent choices in all our choices and relationships—to choose to always be kind, generous, patient; to keep in mind the consequences our actions will have on our bodies, on our whole selves, on others, and on the world around us.

3. Heroes inspire others to live excellent lives.

Since they are so out-of-the-ordinary, and since they never stop trying to make excellent choices, they stand out by their goodness and excellence—and inspire others to strive for a greater excellence in their own lives.

Step 2: Introduce a hero. Tell the story of Marc Gold, *The Shoestring Philanthropist*, and ask students to think about two questions:

- How does Marc demonstrate excellence?
- What are ways that I can imitate Marc?

In 1989, on a tour of India, Marc Gold met Thinlay, a Tibetan refugee, who invited him to his home. His wife, Tsering, welcomed him, but kept holding her ears. She suffered from a painful, deadly infection. Gold sought out a physician and then bought her the necessary antibiotic, which cost only \$1—saving her life, followed by a hearing aid that cost \$35 and permitted her to return to work. “I was thunderstruck,” he said, “realizing I could restore her hearing for a relative pittance. I thought you had to be wealthy to do such things.”

Since then, Gold has traveled through Asia handing money to the needy in small amounts, as little as 50 cents and rarely amounts larger than \$500. In Vietnam, a small donation permitted a widow to buy a sewing machine and start a business; in Indonesia, a fisherman fixed his boat. All of this money is raised over the course of a few months every year, through conversations with friends in their living rooms. When he travels, he keeps his eyes on the rare cases that may not otherwise be identified by large aid organizations. In all of his work, he encourages others to be shoestring philanthropists—taking a small amount, raising some more funds, and then giving these small amounts to start a chain reaction.

Supplemental Activity:

- Use the *The Shoestring Philanthropist, Parade* article for reference.

Explain: Notice the way that Marc changes his entire life, going forward, after the encounter that he has with a person in need—and that person’s human dignity. What he demonstrates for us is that heroes do not need to come in huge shapes or sizes, but can be created in the smallest acts of kindness, in those constant decisions we make daily to demonstrate excellence.

Step 4: Help students prepare to become heroes. Write on the board:

- **patience:** the ability to endure present difficulties for a good end or outcome

Explain: As we grow in human excellence, with the making of excellent choices, we will need to be prepared to be patient—to try again and again, even when we have a difficult time, even when we make wrong choices, even when it doesn’t seem as if we are growing into heroes.

Ask students to fill in the *Who Do I Want to Be?* worksheet, identifying a personal hero and the steps they will take to imitate a heroic trait of the selected hero, and making a plan to practice patience along the way.

Then ask for student volunteers to share their answers regarding their hero. The teacher should conclude the lesson by modeling his or her own answer with regards to a hero. Finally, discuss the common traits shared by all the heroes.

Step 5: Summarize: We have spent much time looking at the human person’s different powers, the powers to think and choose, and our ability to express our creativity in the making of art, culture, and technology. Now we can see even more clearly the way in which the ultimate goal of the human life is to grow in excellence, as it is the most excellent of people who become heroes.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to put into practice their plan of action for imitating their personal hero’s trait, from the *Who Do I Want to Be?* worksheet, and to create a visual summary of their practice—i.e., a photograph, a drawing, a video.

This documentation may contribute to the class’ final **Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC)** newspaper project (see lesson 6B).

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Underline practice as a key to growing in excellence.

Explain: In 2008, reporter Malcolm Gladwell published a book called *Outliers: The Story of Success*. In it, he explains that one of the things that makes successful people is “The 10,000 Hour Rule”: successful people spend 10,000 hours practicing their craft before they become successful.

Write on the board:

2 hours/week	4 hours/week	7 hours/week
8 hours/month	16 hours/month	28 hours/month
96 hours/year	192 hours/year	336 hours/year
<u>104 years</u>	<u>52 years</u>	<u>28 years</u>

Research shows that practice isn’t everything when it comes to success—different talents, personal histories, and given opportunities all make a difference. Becoming a hero, however, isn’t about success: it’s about making the most excellent choices, which include practicing those tasks that help us grow in human excellence. Those things that are most important to us on the path to becoming heroes deserve significant time from us every single week—maybe even an hour a day!



Name _____

Date: _____

Who Do I Want To Be?

Directions: Name and draw your hero. Around your hero, write in heroic qualities and/or draw to depict what makes him/ her your hero.

a hero of mine:

Why is this person your hero?

Choose one of your hero's traits to imitate. _____

Explain why this trait is important to human excellence. _____

What will you need to do, and for how many hours in your life will you need to practice to accomplish it?



PURPOSE

To highlight that there is an intrinsic social element to our humanity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize that humans are social, relational beings.
2. Identify ways in which our relationships make us who we are

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *How Many Squares* image

VOCABULARY

- **social**: The characteristic of human beings to form relationships with other human beings
- **interdependence**: The characteristic of human beings to need other human beings and to be needed themselves

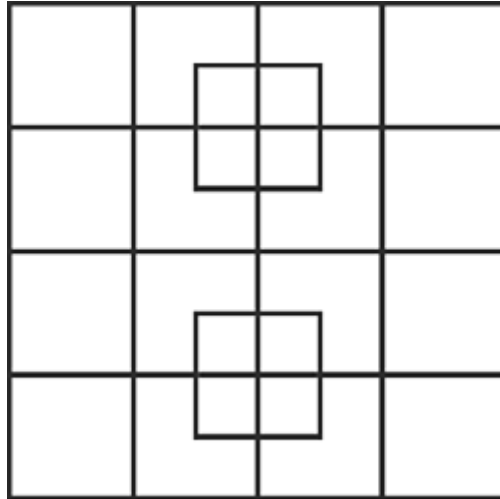
PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson, with the following questions:

- What are some excellent choices that make someone a Hero?
- Do we think that people who become heroes do it all by themselves? Or do they need the help of other people?
- Can we all think of times someone else helped us make an excellent decision? How about times when others prevented us from making an excellent decision?

Step 2: Introduce the theme of the lesson by doing the following activity with the class, then discuss the follow-up questions.

Do the “**How Many Squares**” activity with the class. Draw or project the figure depicted below on the board.



Have the students individually write down on a piece of paper how many squares they count. Then go around the room and have them share their answers. These will typically range anywhere from 17 to 36. Now have them pair up with a neighbor and go through the same exercise again. Then have them get into groups of 4 or 5 and repeat the exercise once again. As the groups get bigger you should see them get closer to the correct answer of 40.

Explain: The point of the exercise is to demonstrate our interdependence. When everyone is trying to guess the number on their own, most people will not find them all. However, individual students can help each other to find squares that others have missed. The best way for everyone to win is to work together. In this game, just like in real life, the best way for success is to embrace that we are dependent on others and work together.

Ask:

- Who are some people we are dependent on? Who are some people dependent on us?
- In which ways are human beings dependent upon one another?

Write on the board:

- **interdependence:** The characteristic of human beings to need other human beings and to be needed themselves.

Explain: Human beings need many different things. We need food in order to eat, we need water in order to drink, we need shelter in order to stay warm, etc. We also have higher needs like a need to know the truth, a need to make the best decisions, and a need to encounter beautiful things. For all of these needs and more, we need others to help us attain them and they need us for the same reason.

Step 3: Help students understand that others play a role in forming us as individuals.

After the students have been introduced to the idea of interdependence, write on the board:

- **social:** The characteristic of human beings to form relationships with other human beings

Explain: Because human beings are interdependent, we are constantly sharing feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and choices with those around us. This creates a situation where the people around us are always influencing who we are and who we are becoming. We should always hope to use this influence in the most excellent way by directing others to be the most excellent people they can be.

Activity: Have the students brainstorm and write down several traits, beliefs, or even mannerisms that they believe to be a part of who they are. After they have written a handful down, ask them to think about and then write down who could have influenced them to have that trait, belief, or mannerism.

Ask:

Has anyone been influenced by their parents? How so?

Has anyone been influenced by their classmates? How so?

Has anyone been influenced by their friends? How so?

Has anyone been influenced by their teacher? How so?

Has anyone been influenced to be excellent by anyone else?

Step 4: Play the Circle game

Activity: The purpose of this game is to illustrate how much we share in common with others. Have the entire class line up in a circle. Everyone should take off their shoes which serve as a place holder. One by one, students should move to the middle and say something about themselves, i.e. “I like to read”, “My favorite color is the color red”, “My favorite school subject is math”, etc. When a statement applies to someone standing in the circle, they have to leave and find another pair of shoes to stand besides fast. It becomes like a game of musical chairs. The last person who does not get to a pair of shoes becomes the new person in the middle.

Step 5: Summarize: Today continues our journey through understanding of the dignity of the person. In our last lesson, we looked at how our dignity is related to our ability to make excellent choices. Today we learned that human beings are dependent on one another, and this result in a situation where they form relationships and influence one another. In the next lesson, we will consider how this social aspect is central to building friendship.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

None.

SUPPLEMENTS

None.



PURPOSE

To highlight how friendships can aid our quest for human excellence

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Understand friendships as relationships based in mutual affection and centered around the pursuit of excellence
2. Recognize the role of effort, and respect for human dignity in forming and sustaining friendships

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- white printer paper
- drawing tools (i.e., colored pencils, markers)

VOCABULARY

- **friendship**: a bond of mutual affection between two people who pursue excellence together
- **effort**: the determined act of trying to achieve or complete something

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson, with the following questions:

- Given that human beings are social, how does our pursuit of excellence relate to our social life?
- What are some ways we can act excellently towards others? What are some ways we can fall short of doing so?
- How can we help others to make excellent choices? How do we at times do the opposite?

Step 2: Introduce friendship with a class discussion and story.

Ask the following question, and write student answers on the board:

- What makes someone a true friend?

Based on the answers, work with the class to come up with a classroom definition of friendship, and prompt classroom discussion to tend toward the definition offered here. Finally, write the definition on the board, and ask students to copy it into their notes:

- **friendship**: a bond of mutual affection between two people who pursue excellence together

Read the summary of Sam and Frodo's friendship.

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* series tells the adventures of Frodo the hobbit, who undergoes a long journey and many trials as part of an important quest. Frodo was willing to embark on his quest alone, but his best and most loyal friend, Sam, would not let him go by himself. Sam chose to accompany Frodo, and remained by his side, despite many dangers and risks, including monsters to fight, mountains to climb, and miles and miles to walk. Sam continued to support Frodo, even when it was hard and when it would have been easier and safer to leave him. Sam's actions throughout the story exemplify self-sacrifice and self-gift, and his actions show his deep love for his friend.

You can supplement this summary by using or referencing additional materials from the novels or the film, such as the scene in which Sam carries Frodo up Mount Doom.

Activity: Ask students to think of an occurrence in their own life similar to the message of this story above. The idea is for them to remember a time when a friend helped them to accomplish some good task or some excellent action. Distribute blank sheets of paper and colored pencils or crayons for the students to draw with. Then have the students draw this scene of a friend being a gift to them. The students can, among other things, use speech bubbles and quote the story.

Step 3: Help students understand what it means to be a good friend.

Ask students how to be a good friend in the following situations:

- Your friend asks you to play games even though they have a big test the next day
- Your friend is struggling to walk after he/she sprained their ankle
- A friend feels guilty about how they stole candy and asks you for advice
- Your friend forgot to brush their teeth and their breath smells unpleasant when they talk.
- It's your friend's birthday next week
- A friend is really sad and is crying by themselves at recess

Friendships are not meant to stay the same—they are meant to be an adventure, and to support us in our mission of respecting our own and others' dignity, and to grow in becoming excellent as human persons. As friends try to help each other to become excellent, their friendships will deepen and grow.

Ask students if they have been in situations with friends like the ones above. How did they act? Are there ways in which they acted excellently? Are there ways they could have acted better?

Explain: It is important that we choose to be a good and excellent friend every opportunity we get. However, it is also important to choose friends who will treat us well when they get the opportunity to do so. Friends should be concerned with the other person and help us to make good choices. This is a crucial part of what makes a friendship good in the first place.

However, wanting excellence for the other is not the only ingredient for a good friendship. Friendship also requires that we exert the effort to follow through on our choices. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the task of carrying the ring, which is an object of evil, is a heavy burden for Frodo and it drains much of his energy. He needs Sam alongside him to help get the task of destroying the ring done.

Write on the board:

- **effort**: the determined act of trying to achieve or complete something

We can desire to move the box from one side of the room to the other, but unless we put in the effort to move it nothing will happen. Similarly, we can want to pass our upcoming test, but unless we study, we won't. And we can desire to be friends with someone, but unless we actually put in the effort for a good friendship, it won't just happen.

Example: Taking the case above of the sad student at recess. It is good to want them to feel better, but unless we are putting in the effort by going to talk with them, we are not being a very good friend.

Step 4: Help students to understand that friendship typically begins with a common project.

Explain: While friendship is all about desiring the good for the other person, that bond typically forms through working towards a common task or project. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Frodo and Sam develop and deepen their friendship through their common task of destroying the ring. Through working towards this excellent task together, Frodo and Sam come to a deeper friendship, valuing and appreciating the good of each other.

Activity: Divide the class into pairs of two. Have the students brainstorm together an excellent task the two of them can do in their school. Some examples could include helping the cafeteria staff in cooking or cleaning meals, helping the janitorial staff with keeping the school clean, helping the teacher to organize their classroom, etc. Students could also choose to be accountable to each other in improving study habits, or quitting a bad habit (such as staying up late, or distracting other students) from their habits form. The students should write down a plan for their project, including details on who, what, when, where, why, and how. Teachers can provide guidance about what is both appropriate and feasible. For homework, they should do their cooperative excellent task sometime in the next week, and report back to the class about their projects or provide a written report, following completion.

Step 5: Summarize: Today we have spent some time thinking about the way that living excellent lives is inseparable from helping other people to be excellent. If we want to live in an excellent way, we need to make excellent choices, and we can make excellent choices more easily if we have friends willing to work with us toward being heroes. The truest friendships are those marked by a mutual desire to grow in excellence!

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Do your excellent school project within the next week and make a written or oral report summary as instructed by the teacher.

SUPPLEMENTS

None



PURPOSE

To highlight solidarity as the means by which human beings pursue excellence as a group.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Understand how our human dignity is intrinsically tied to our relationships with others
2. Recognize how human beings can pursue excellence as a community

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Trivia/Jeopardy Grid* game sheet (see Materials)
- *Historic Lunch-Counter Sit-In* video (<https://www.travelchannel.com/videos/historic-lunch-counter-sit-in-0154295>)

VOCABULARY

- **community:** a group of human beings with a shared set of goals, beliefs, and desires
- **solidarity:** the unity of a community which strives for excellence together

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson, with the following questions:

- What does it mean to be friends with someone else?
- What are some ways we can be a good friend? What are some ways we can fall short of being a good friend?
- How can we best desire and strive for our friend's good? What are some ways we can encourage a friend to be excellent?

Step 2: Introduce the theme of the lesson by doing the following activity with the class, then discuss the following questions.

Tell the students you are going to play the *Trivia/Jeopardy Grid* game to review the previous lessons. Use the **grid** in the materials below to set up the categories and point totals for each question. The class should be divided up into three teams. This can serve as a helpful review of what the lessons have been leading up to now. But also, in striving to win and answer the questions correctly, each team is aiming for excellence as a group.

Ask:

- How does working together affirm the human dignity we all share?
- Is it easier to pursue excellence alone or with a group surrounding us?
- What are some other times we worked with a group to do something excellent?

Explain: Just as friendship is when two people live out their human dignity by pursuing excellence together, solidarity is when an entire community lives out their human dignity by pursuing excellence together.

Step 3: Illustrate the story of the Greensboro Four as an example of justice being pursued in a community. Discuss with the following questions.

Explain: The first story that we will look at depicts people working together for justice and fairness in their community.

Before giving the full background information, show students the *Historic Lunch-Counter Sit-In* video, and then explain:

Even though slavery ended in the United States in the 1860s and the American Constitution was changed to establish equal protection under the law, one hundred years later, racial injustices still persisted. African Americans were often prevented from voting and some states enforced segregation, which meant that some places, such as restaurants, would only serve white people. Even water fountains might be labeled to be only for white or black people. Four young black men wanted to make a peaceful statement against segregation, so they took action.

One day, these men, Ezell Blair Jr., David Richmond, Franklin McCain, and Joseph McNeil, went to Woolworth's Diner in Greensboro, North Carolina, and sat down at the lunch counter. They were refused service simply because they were black. Instead of becoming angry or violent, the young men continued to sit at the counter quietly, even though they received no food or drinks. They sat there all day, and then they returned the next day with even more students. Eventually, the sit-in movement spread everywhere. Multiple people began to participate in sit-ins, causing the world to take notice of the unfairness of segregation.

Ask:

- How were these students united in striving for excellence?
- Do you think that the four young men were fighting for human dignity?
- How were these students united together through their pursuit of excellence in their community?
- How did 4 people cause such a big difference?

Explain: The Greensboro Four recognized THIS EXTERNAL VIOLATION of their human dignity. Their support of each other in their choice to stand up for human dignity during the first, non-violent sit-in at Woolworth's Store began an entire movement to defend the human dignity of those with black skin in the United States. In standing up for their human dignity, the Greensboro Four were upholding not just their own dignity, but the dignity of all people everywhere. They desired the common good of the entire community. The four made an excellent choice together, and others joined it, and they acted in a way that expanded respect for the human dignity of all people.

Step 4: Help students recognize more specific instances of solidarity they can perform in their community.

Activity: Have the students split into small groups. In their small groups, have them brainstorm ways in which they can show solidarity in their community just like the Greensboro Four.

Ask:

- Who are the particularly vulnerable members of their community?
- How can we affirm the human dignity of these vulnerable people?
- What are some concrete things we could do as a class to affirm the dignity of vulnerable members of the community?

Afterwards, the class can come together, and the teacher can put all the ideas on the board. As a class, vote on all the proposals and have the one with the most votes be the solidarity project for the class. Over the next few weeks, the students should work together to bring the class solidarity project to life. It is important that the project be both realistic and challenging. If the teacher does not think one or more of the group proposals meets both of these qualifications, take it out of consideration but explain why. Parental involvement should be encouraged in whatever degree possible.

Step 5: Summarize: Today continues our journey through the understanding of the dignity of the person. Solidarity emphasizes that human dignity is something all human beings possess by virtue of being human. We live out that human dignity as a group by pursuing human excellence together and the common good.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

None.

SUPPLEMENTS

None.

	Human Dignity		Plants, Animals, and Humans		Being Social		Being a Hero		Friendship	
100 points	Q: True or False - Someone with dignity must be treated with respect.	A: True	Q: True or False - Plants have the sense of taste and touch.	A: False	Q: True or False - It is easy to share our thoughts and beliefs about human dignity without language.	A: False	Q: True or False – Only people with superpowers can be heroes.	A: False	Q: True or False – Friends are just people who make one another laugh and smile.	A: False
200 points	Q: Who has human dignity? A) Only people with a red shirt on, B) Only adults, C) Everyone	A: C	Q: How are humans different from animals? A) By the ability to think, B) By the ability to choose, C) By having human dignity, D) All of the above	A: D	Q: What is the word for a group of human beings that live together with shared thoughts and beliefs? A) a herd, B) a community, C) a team, D) a company	A: B	Q: What makes a hero a hero? A) A fancy haircut, B) A charming smile, C) Making good decisions, D) Being really smart	A: C	Q: What does a true friend always desire? A) What’s best for their friend, B) What will give their friend the most fun, C) Ice cream, D) Fun toys	A: A
300 points	Q: What does it mean to say that human dignity is “inalienable”?	A: It cannot be given or taken away.	Q: What are the five senses that animals and humans both share?	A: Taste, Touch, Sight, Hearing, Smell	Q: How do members of a community help one another?	A: They help each other to make excellent choices.	Q: When is the best time to strive to become a hero?	A: Right now!	Q: How do people become friends?	A: By working on an excellent task together.

Trivia/Jeopardy Grid game sheet



Human Dignity Curriculum

PURPOSE

To highlight love as a response to the value and human dignity of another person.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Become aware of how love takes many forms (parental, fraternal, romantic, etc..).
2. Recognize that love affirms the value of the other person and expresses itself through self-gift (helping, supporting, enjoying with each other, affirming) in order to choose the good for the other.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *Love Venn Diagram* worksheet (see Materials)
- *Hero Preparation* worksheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **love:** To affirm the value of another person because of their intrinsic worth
- **self-gift:** Sharing what is best in ourselves with another and helping another to choose what is good

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Explain: In the past lessons, we have learned about how human beings are social beings. Then we learned how our social nature leads us to build friendships centered around the pursuit of human excellence. These individual relationships between people can expand to form a group unity, solidarity, which is the result of a community pursuing excellence together. Today, we are going to learn about love and its relationship to human dignity.

Step 2: Introduce love.

Tell the students you are going to play a "word association" game. You are going to say a word and the students should respond with whatever comes to mind. Try to write whatever words they say on the board. Begin with one or two words they are already familiar with by now like "dignity" or "solidarity." Then, throw out the word "love."

The exercise is meant to get the students thinking explicitly about something they are already implicitly familiar with, that is, loving and being loved.

Explain: We all know what it looks like to spend time and feel happy in the company of the people we love. It is something we encounter every day in books, films, and our daily lives. Love is something we see so often that we sometimes forget how valuable it is. We feel happy to feel loved by our family and friends and we show them love because it is a way to affirm our human dignity as well as theirs!

Write on the board:

- **love:** To affirm the value of another person because of their intrinsic worth

Explain: When we look at this definition of love, we can see that love not only involves the recognition of another's dignity but also the choice to give of ourselves to another to the best of our ability. What makes the act of loving hard is that we might have to give up our own desires for the sake of affirming or respecting the other. We call this **self-gift**.

Write on the board:

- **self-gift:** Sharing what is best in ourselves with another and helping another to choose what is good

Step 3: Further the understanding of love.

Activity: Have the students play a game called "Love charades." Give each student a slip of paper and have them write down a way that they will show love. It could be helping your parents by taking out the garbage, sharing your toys with your siblings, telling someone "I love you!", etc. After the students have finished writing a way that they show love, collect the slips of paper and mix them up in a container. Pick a volunteer randomly to take a slip of paper and then ask them to act out the way of showing love written on the slip of paper without speaking. The other students will try to guess. After they guess correctly, select another volunteer and repeat the process.

Explain: The purpose of the activity is to become familiar with the little ways that we show love. Simple actions that put others before ourselves can be profound moments of showing and demonstrating love. We have to always be on the lookout for these ways to "gift" ourselves to others simply but meaningfully. In real life, just as in the game, it is important to recognize when these moments of self-gift occur and to be grateful when we are the receiver of them. But remember! Even though you are called to give yourself to others, you have human dignity too! You have to make sure you are taking care of yourself so you can be in a position to love others, and to love well.

Step 4: The different kinds of love

Ask:

When we use the word “love,” do we use it in different ways? Do we love our parents?

How do we show love to our parents?

Do we love our siblings? How do we show love to our siblings?

Do we love our friends? How do we show love to our friends?

How are these kinds of love similar and different?

Do parents love each other?

Are these all the same kinds of love?

Explain: “Love” is a term that gets used in several different but related ways. However, the way parents love each other, is different from how siblings love each other, which is different from how friends love each other. Parental love is romantic, but is also ordered to the common good of the family that they have formed. Sibling love is a matter of what family we happened to be born into. We do not choose our siblings, but we love them anyway, even if it is difficult. We should get along with our siblings, but even if we do not they are still our siblings no matter what. Friendship love is more something that we choose. In friendship we enjoy, but also recognize and affirm those things in the other person that make them excellent. We love what is good about them, and, in special friendships, we help them to become even more excellent in new and undiscovered ways.

Still all these kinds of love have something in common. In all kinds of love there is an experience of self-gift. Parents give of themselves to their children. Brothers give of themselves to their sisters. And friends give of themselves to their friends. In all these different relationships, to love means to respect the goodness of the other person, and to affirm and help that person to pursue good and excellent things in their lives.

Have students complete the *Love Venn Diagram* to compare and contrast the different kinds of love.

Step 5: Love and Friendship

Explain: Friendship is about pursuing excellence together. Friends help each other make excellent decisions and work on good and excellent projects together. However, love brings friendships to an even deeper level. Two friends have the common project of becoming excellent and they work to help each other become excellent. However, love means that each friend really places the excellence of the other person above their own. This often means a friend will need to sacrifice, to help each other choose the good. This is what self-gift means.

Ask:

- When have you put the needs and concerns of a friend above yours?
- Did you have to sacrifice something? What was it?
- Is it easy to put others first?

Step 5: Summarize: Today we learned about love and how it requires self-gift to give ourselves to another. We do all these things in order to show love for someone. However, we must always remember that this must be done in ways that will affirm our own dignity as well.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Students should complete the *Hero Preparation* worksheet in preparation for the last class. Students can ask parents for help and input as they please.

SUPPLEMENTS

None



Human
Dignity
Curriculum

Name: _____

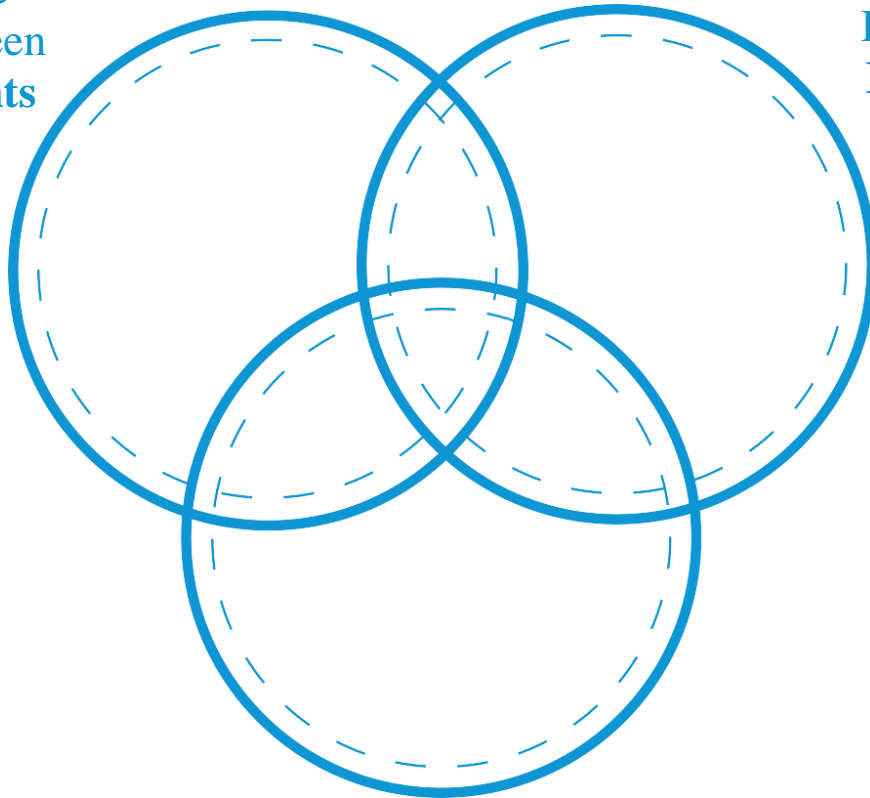
Date: _____

Love Venn Diagram

- 1 How are the three kinds of love different?
- 2 How are they the same?

Love
Between
Parents

Love
Between
Friends



Love Between
Siblings



Hero Preparation

Name: _____
Date: _____

Directions: Fill in the blank spaces below.

Part One: Who I Am

My name: _____ Where I was born: _____

A list of my gifts and talents: _____

One way that I have used a gift or talent in an excellent way: _____

One thing I struggle doing well: _____

One dream I have for my life: _____

Some excellent things that I do with my friends: _____

Moments in which I struggle respecting others' human dignity: _____

Moments in which I struggle with non-excellent habits: _____

Part Two: Who I Want to Become

If I was to star as the hero of a novel or a movie, the novel or movie would be about:

I would demonstrate courage by: _____

I would demonstrate patience by: _____

I can demonstrate courage and patience in my life today these ways: _____

I will make an effort to be more kind to, generous to, and patient with: _____

To be excellent with regards to **my body**, I will develop this good habit and avoid this bad habit:

1. _____.

2. _____.

To be excellent with regards to **my whole person**, I will develop this good habit and avoid this bad habit:

1. _____.

2. _____.

To be excellent with regards to **those around me**, I will develop this good habit and avoid this bad habit:

1. _____.

2. _____.

Two ways that I will contribute to excellence in my community and society:

1. _____.

2. _____.



PURPOSE

To integrate the course into a personal commitment to the pursuit of human excellence.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Commit to daily practice of excellence.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- art project materials (i.e., crayons, markers, construction paper, magazines, scissors, glue)
- *Hero Preparation* worksheet (see Materials [for Lesson 6D])
- *The Hero's Charter* worksheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

No new vocabulary.

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Explain the purpose of the last class: We have spent a number of weeks learning about the human person: the place that he has in the world and his unique potential to live intentionally, making choices to grow in human excellence every day of his life. We have, in other words, learned that we can live as heroes if we only want and choose to.

Today we are going to take the time to put all of the pieces together, and make a commitment to live in an excellent way.

Step 2: Review the concept of human dignity with the question: What do we call the value that all human beings share?

Write on the board:

- **universal**
- **intrinsic**
- **inalienable**

Ask students to review the meaning of the three prongs to human dignity with a partner. Take answers from the class before writing in the correct definitions:

- **universal:** every person has dignity
- **intrinsic:** our dignity is with us our entire life; it is part of who we are
- **inalienable:** dignity cannot be given to us or taken away from us

Explain: It is our dignity that makes possible our experience of value—both our own value, and other's value—and it is our dignity that gives us the desire to live excellent lives. To live an excellent life is the best way to showcase the dignity we each have.

Next, have each other students list all the powers explained in the HDC. Then across the top of the paper students should write “plants,” animals”, and “humans.” From memory, have them recreate the chart from earlier explaining which beings have which powers. Have them share their answer with a friend to see if they got the same answer.

	plants	animals	humans
POWERS			
eat	x	x	x
grow	x	x	x
reproduce	x	x	x
move from place to place on their own		x	x
use the senses		x	X
feel emotions		x	X
think			X
choose			X

Finally, have the students reflect on friendship and think of two really good friends they have in their life. Ask: Why are these such good friends? What is the foundation of your strong friendship?

[Respect for Human Dignity!]

Step 3: Hand each student a copy of *The Hero's Charter* worksheet, and give them the remain- der of the class time to write and design their own charter, drawing on the brainstorming they did as homework with the *Hero Preparation* worksheet.

Step 4: Conclude the course: Each of us is a human person, with human dignity—our value which no one can give us or take away from us, a value we always have because we are human! It is a value that can be expressed by the use of our two special powers: thinking and choosing. The way to use these powers is to always intentionally choose human excellence by acting in ways that always affirm our own human dignity and the dignity of

others.

If we make these excellent choices every day, by practicing effort and patience, kindness and generosity, and by never giving up, we will grow up to be heroes who can change the world. Some heroes are known, others are hidden. Regardless of the path that we will take, every day, every choice is practice for us so that we may be ready for the challenges ahead.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to share their charter with their parents.

SUGGESTED CLASS PROJECT

The teacher can take a class photo of students holding their charters, or scan individual charters, and add them to the ***Human Dignity Chronicle***. This chronicle should then be presented to the remainder of the classes/grade and/or the school, as fitting, in summary of the work done during the **Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC)**.

The Hero's Charter

Who am I?

What can I do?

Who can I become?

I, _____, pledge, on this day, _____,
(name) (date)

to commit to the daily practice of excellence in all of my choices and actions. I
pledge to: _____

I make this pledge with the desire to become a hero in my life, with the help of
all my powers, in respect of my own human dignity and the human dignity of
all those around me.

Signature

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Lesson 4A

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